



ROCKLAND ENERGY COMMITTEE

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen and Citizens of the Town of Rockland:

There is no doubt that Rockland is now a community on the move when it comes to ensuring a 'green' energy future. Over the past year, our committee has made great progress towards achieving our mission of making Rockland a community that becomes more cognizant of our ever-changing environment and growing energy needs, as well as utilizing efficient, cost-effective and environmentally-sound energy alternatives.

Perhaps our most exciting and rewarding news came at the end of last year / beginning of this year when the committee was notified that the town of Rockland was awarded a total of \$180,000 from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) to construct a 20.6-kilowatt photovoltaic solar array on the roof of the high school. Last November – after a lengthy application process and a number of meetings with solar companies and our partners in the school department – we submitted a grant proposal for this funding to the MTC. Along with saving the school department an estimated \$4,000 in annual energy costs, these grant-funded panels will be incorporated into a larger renewable energy education curriculum at the high school and serve as an important learning opportunity for the many town residents who frequent the building on a regular basis.

In 2008, the Rockland Energy Committee continued to also work closely with the Superintendent of Schools and members of the School Committee in ongoing efforts to improve the energy-efficiency of our school buildings. Based on the results of recent energy audits at each of our three elementary schools, the school department was awarded a total of \$149,750 for energy-efficiency improvements at the Esten, Jefferson and Memorial Park Elementary Schools. These improvements will include new windows and lighting, entrance ways, occupancy sensors and insulation. Through the partnership formed by our committee with National Grid, plans for similar projects are also being formed at the high school. Coupled together, the funding awarded to the Rockland Energy Committee and our schools over the past year represents over \$330,000 for energy improvements – a remarkable success for the town and its taxpayers. Moving forward, we plan to continue our partnership with the schools and use it as the framework for creating similar partnerships with all town departments.

The bulk of the committee's work for the year was also spent working with the Board of Selectmen to negotiate with a new electric energy provider for the town. As we indicated in our last annual report to you, Rockland – up until December 2008 – had an electric utility rate of 5.6 cents/kWh, a rate that was very reasonable compared to surrounding towns. Though we quickly realized at the beginning of our research that securing a similar rate would be virtually

impossible due to what had become a volatile energy market, we wanted to make sure that we worked with the Selectmen to negotiate the best deal possible for the town. After a year-long and exhaustive process, we made our recommendations to the Selectmen in October and they signed on with Constellation New Energy for very competitive rate of 10.67 cents/kWh until this June. The Energy Committee expects to continue working with the Selectmen in the coming months, and urges all departments to work with us in bundling our energy contracts to make sure the town continues to receive the best rate possible.

In the spirit of partnering with town departments to save Rockland money with energy costs, the Energy Committee also facilitated an agreement between EnerNOC and Rockland/Abington Joint Water Works. EnerNOC is a program that partners with governmental and private entities who agree to either reduce their energy consumption during peak periods or send energy back to the energy grid during these times. Some members of EnerNOC's network are able to reduce their energy simply by turning-off lights, while others – such as the case of the Water Department – make money from the program by using their generators. These generators supply their own on-site power during a demand overload. And, regardless of whether or not the generators are ever called into action, EnerNOC will pay \$1.00/kWh per month based on a committed amount of energy agreed to by EnerNOC and the Water Department. The Sewer Department, for example, has been an active participant in this program and this year will receive roughly \$2,160 from the company.



Committee member Jim Paul specs out the 255kW generator at the Hannigan Reservoir Water Treatment Facility for use in the EnerNOC program.

Progress has also been made in studying the feasibility of bringing a wind turbine – or turbines – to Rockland. In June 2008, our entire committee joined wind-site survey engineers from UMass-



Committee members Heidi Hosmer (left) and Carol Perilli (right) getting a feel for the land during the UMass-Amherst Wind Turbine site-study at the Hannigan Reservoir.

Amherst to compile wind data at a number of locations throughout the town. Since then, however, the Commonwealth – in its plans to move the entire state towards a 'green' future – has implemented the 'Green Communities Act', new legislation and regulations aimed at partnering with municipalities to invest in renewable-energy opportunities. We are continuing to work with our state legislators – Senator Morrissey and Representative Nyman, officials at the MTC, the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and various other stakeholders to learn more about these new regulations and how they may assist us in bringing wind energy to the town.

Though we have made great progress for the town

during the short year-and-a-half that we have been together, none of it would have been possible without the support and continued partnerships from nearly every town department, our elected state and federal officials – Congressman Bill Delahunt, State Senator Michael Morrissey, Representative Bob Nyman, and their respective offices, a number of state agencies, renewable energy ‘experts’ and, most importantly, the residents of Rockland.

Going forward, the Rockland Energy Committee believes that it is well-poised to make continued progress for the town of Rockland. From our submissions into the town’s application for ‘shovel-ready’ projects from the federal economic stimulus bill, to hopefully receiving the long-awaited results of our second submission for a federal USDA energy grant to fund a year-long wind study and the construction of a wind turbine, and continuing to work to understand what additional resources may be available to Rockland from the Commonwealth’s so-called ‘Green Communities Act’, there is no doubt that we’re ready to keep on moving.

We look forward to continuing our work with you, each town department, and all of our neighbors towards reaching these goals.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Mullen, Jr., Secretary

Rockland Energy Committee:

Carol Perilli, Chair

James Paul, Vice-Chair

Michael Mullen, Jr., Secretary

Heidi Hosmer, Treasurer

Frank Delprete

Steve Johnson